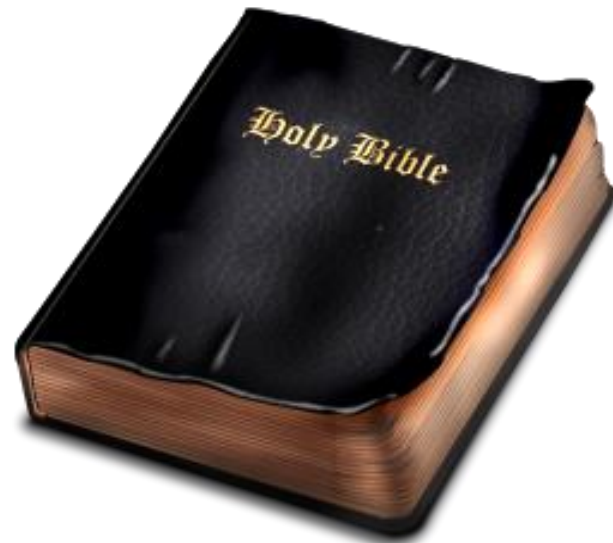


# Can We Trust the Bible?



# Questioning the Scriptures

**"Likewise today we find that Christian Bible scholars have given such extensive criticism on the Hebrew scriptures (commonly called the O. T.) as to bring into question their validity and value."**

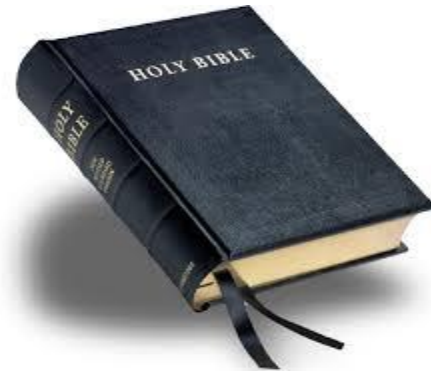
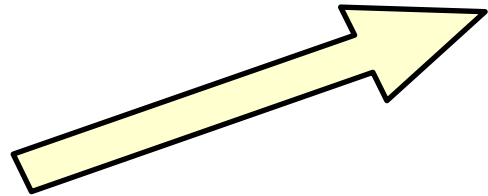
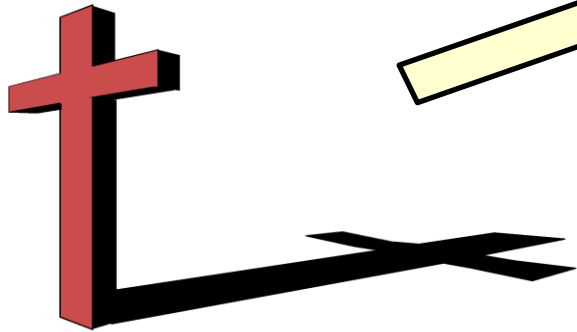
**(Dr. El Dareer; Hutto - El Dareer Debate; p.10; Hiram Hutto, pub.; Jan. 1978.)**

## Questioning the Scriptures

**"As for eyewitnesses, I am sure you are all familiar with the fact that none of the four canonized Gospels in the N. T. was authored by any disciples of Jesus. In fact, the authors of the Gospels are unknown or their identities uncertain since all we have are Greek translations of what was supposedly written in Hebrew or Syriac."**

**(Dr. El Dareer; p. 23; ibid.)**

**We believe that all truth, all we know  
about Jesus, is found in the Bible**



**We don't have the original documents!**



**How can we be sure the copies we have are accurate?**

# Borrowing Class Notes





# The Old Testament

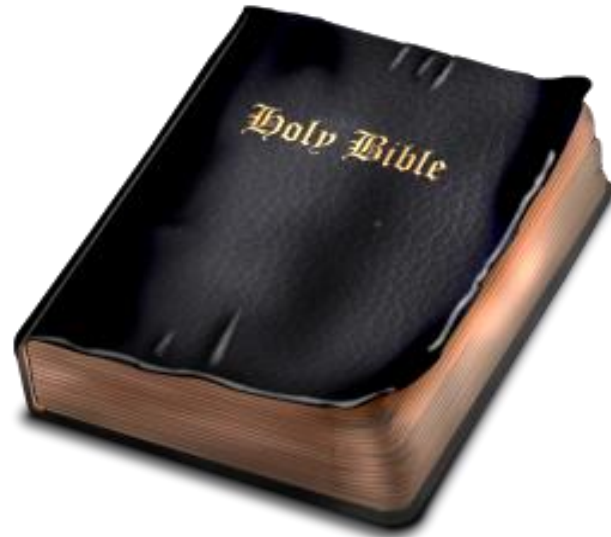




# Old Testament

- **Assembled into one body of writings about 410 B.C. by the time of Ezra.**
- **OT canon closed 90-100 A.D.**
- **From that time forward extraordinary care given to preserve the text.**
  - **Masorettes**
- **The Dead Sea Scrolls predate Jesus.**

# The New Testament



# How many copies do we have and how old are they?



## Bibliographical Test

## **The Number of Copies**

**"...on the basis of manuscript tradition alone the works that make up the Christian's New Testament made up the most frequently copied and widely circulated books of antiquity.**

**(The Harvest of Hellenism, F. W. Peters, pg. 50)**

## **The Number of Copies**

**"To be skeptical of the resultant text of the NT books is to allow all of classical antiquity to slip into obscurity. For no documents of the ancient period are as well attested bibliographically as the NT."**

**(History and Christianity, by J. W. Montgomery, pg. 29)**

	<u>Written</u>	<u>Earliest Copy</u>	<u>Time Span</u>	<u>No. of Copies</u>
<b>Caesar</b>	<b>100-44 BC</b>	<b>900 AD</b>	<b>1,000 yrs.</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Plato</b>	<b>427-347 BC</b>	<b>900 AD</b>	<b>1,200 yrs.</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Suetonius</b>	<b>75-160 AD</b>	<b>950 AD</b>	<b>800 yrs.</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Sophocles</b>	<b>496-406 BC</b>	<b>1000 AD</b>	<b>1,400 yrs.</b>	<b>193</b>
<b>Homer</b>	<b>900 BC</b>	<b>400 BC</b>	<b>500 yrs.</b>	<b>643</b>
<b>New Testament</b>	<b>40-100 AD</b>	<b>125 AD</b>	<b>25 yrs.</b>	<b>24,000+</b>

## **The Bible and the Iliad**

**"The Iliad has about 15,600 lines. Only 40 lines (or 400 words) of the NT are in doubt whereas 764 lines of the Iliad are questioned. This 5% textual corruption compares with 1/2 of 1% of similar emendations in the NT."**

**(A General Introduction to the Bible, Norman L. Geisler, pg. 367.)**

## **What about variations in the manuscripts?**

**Schaff says not one of the variations, altered, "an article of faith or precept of duty which is not abundantly sustained by other undoubted passages, or by the whole tenor of scripture teaching."**

**(Companion to the Greek Testament and the English Version, Philip Schaff, pg. 177.)**

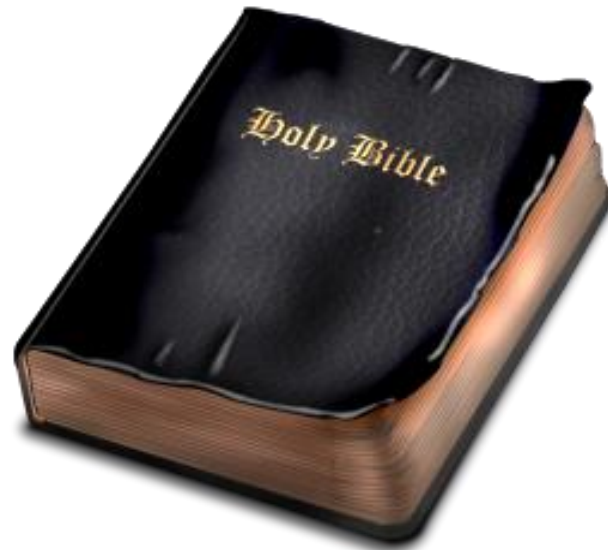


## What about variations in the manuscripts?

**"One word of warning already referred to must be emphasized in conclusion. No fundamental doctrine of the Christian faith rests on a disputed reading... It cannot be too strongly asserted that in substance the text of the Bible is certain: especially is this the case with the NT."**

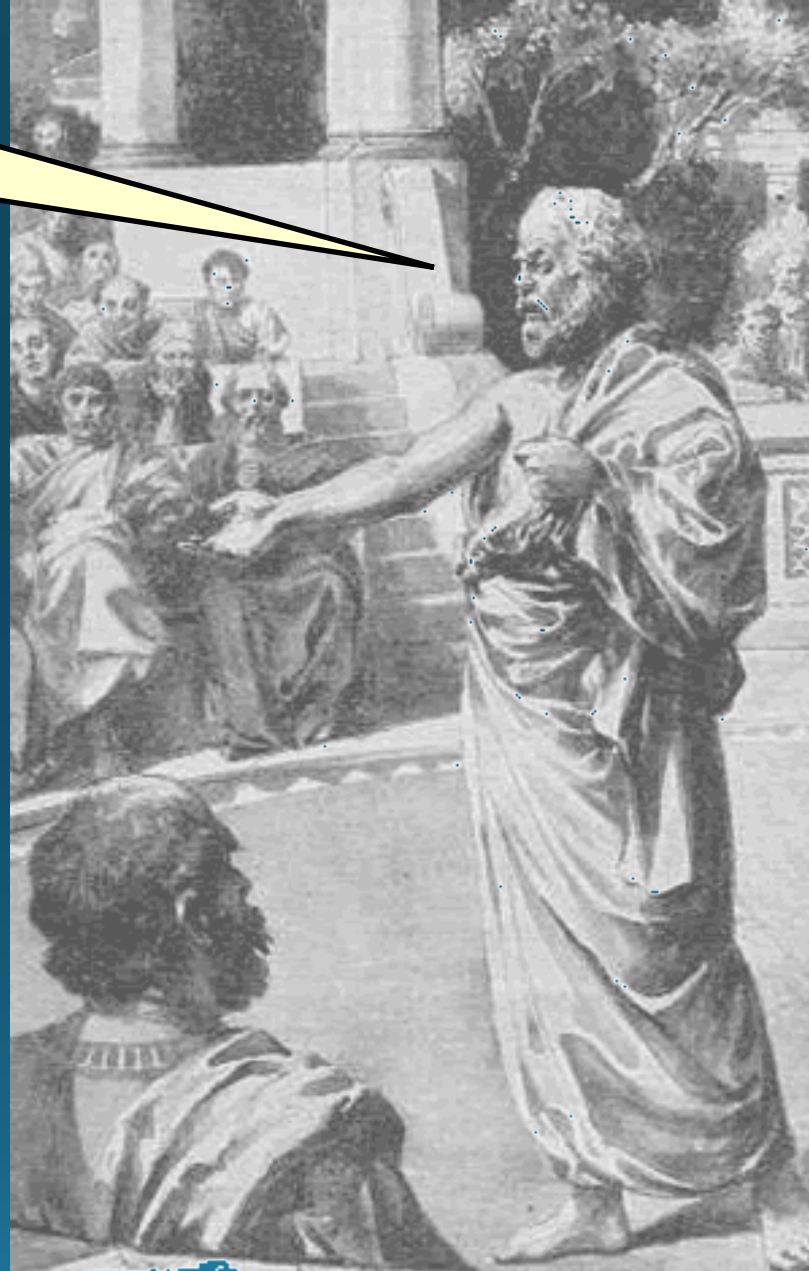
**(Our Bible and the Ancient Manuscripts, by Frederick G. Kenyon, pg. 23).**

# **What does the New Testament say about itself?**



## **The Internal Test**

**“Peter is a totally awesome dude!”**



## Let The Book Testify About Itself

**"Literary critics still follow Aristotle's dictum that 'the benefit of the doubt is to be given to the document itself, not arrogated by the critic to himself.' Therefore, 'one must listen to the claims of the document under analysis, and not assume fraud or error unless the author disqualified himself by contradictions or known factual inaccuracies.'"**

**(History and Christianity, J. W. Montgomery, pg. 29).**

# Dealing with Contradictions

- Do we correctly understand the text?
- Do we possess all available knowledge in this matter?
- Can no further light possibly be thrown on the passage by advancing knowledge, textual research, archaeology, etc.?
- *"Difficulties do not constitute objections. Unsolved problems are not of necessity errors."*

(The Book Speaks For Itself, Robt. Horn, 1970, pg. 86f)

## The Claims of the Eyewitnesses

Luke 1:1-3 - "Inasmuch as many have taken in hand to set in order a narrative of those things which have been fulfilled among us, <sup>2</sup> just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word delivered them to us, <sup>3</sup> it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write to you an orderly account, most excellent Theophilus."

## The Claims of the Eyewitnesses

2 Peter 1:16 - “For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty.”

1 John 1:3 - “That which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.”

## The Claims of the Eyewitnesses

**John 19:35** “And he who has seen has testified, and his testimony is true; and he knows that he is telling the truth, so that you may believe.”

**Acts 2:22** “Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know.”



## The Claims of the Eyewitnesses

Acts 26:24-26 - "Now as he thus made his defense, Festus said with a loud voice, "Paul, you are beside yourself! Much learning is driving you mad!" <sup>25</sup> But he said, "I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak the words of truth and reason. <sup>26</sup> "For the king, before whom I also speak freely, knows these things; for I am convinced that none of these things escapes his attention, since this thing was not done in a corner."

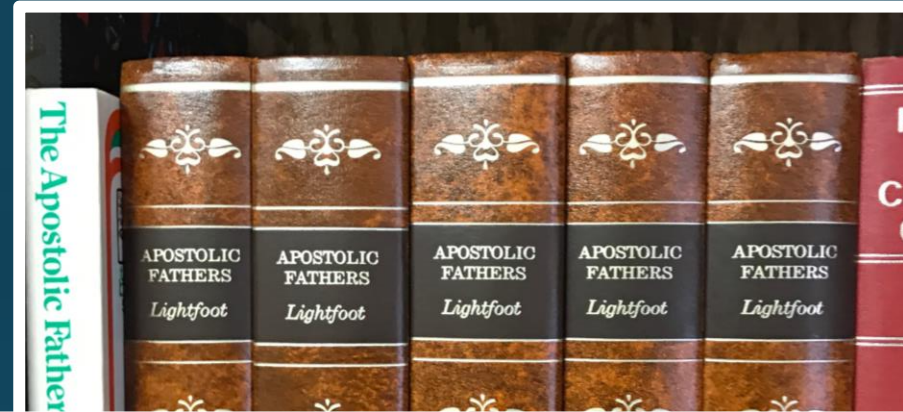
# The External Evidence



**"Do other writers and materials confirm or deny the internal testimony provided by the documents themselves?"**



# The "Apostolic Fathers"

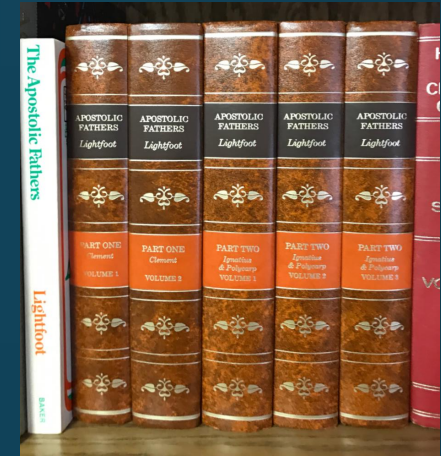


32,000 citations from scripture in the writings of these early church fathers.



# The "Apostolic Fathers"

- Irenaeus of Lyons (AD 180)
- Clement of Rome (AD 95)
- Ignatius of Antioch (AD 70-110)
- Polycarp (AD 70-156)
- Flavius Josephus (1st Century AD)



# Evidence of Archaeology

**Archaeology** - "The study of ancient peoples and civilizations as learned by what they left behind."

Biblical archaeology is such studies taking place in Bible lands.



# Evidence of Archaeology



# Evidence of Archaeology





# Testimony of Archaeologists

**William F. Albright, called the dean of Biblical archaeologists, said of the Bible, "Thanks to modern research we now recognize its substantial historicity."**

**(Return to Biblical Theology, "The Christian Century,"  
Nov. 19, 1958, p. 1329)**

## Testimony of Archaeologists

- "As a matter of fact, however, it may be stated categorically that no archaeological discovery has ever controverted a Biblical reference."  
( Nelson Glueck; Rivers in the Desert, p. 31.)
- "Nowhere has archaeological discovery refuted the Bible as history"  
(Gleason L. Archer, Bibliotheca Sacra, Jan.-Mar., 1970, p. 5.)

# Testimony of Archaeologists

**"Thus far, no historical statement in the Bible has been proven false on the basis of evidence retrieved through archaeological research."**

**(Keith N Schoville; Biblical Archaeology in Focus; pg. 167; Baker: 1978.)**

## Testimony of Archaeologists

**"The Acts of the Apostles is now generally agreed in scholarly circles to be the work of Luke, to belong to the first century and to involve the labors of a careful historian who was substantially accurate in his use of sources."**

**(M. F. Unger,  
Archaeology and the New Testament, 1962, pg. 24.)**

## Testimony of Archaeologists

**Sir William Ramsay concluded, "Luke is a historian of the first rank; not merely are his statements of fact trustworthy... this author should be placed along with the very greatest of historians."**

**(The Bearing of Recent Discoveries on the Trust-worthiness of the New Testament, 1915; pg. 222).**

**"To be skeptical of the resultant text of the NT books is to allow all of classical antiquity to slip into obscurity. For no documents of the ancient period are as well attested bibliographically as the New Testament."**

**(History and Christianity, by J. W. Montgomery, pg.29**

# The Role of Inspiration

